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Development of the student entrepreneurial community at universities (experience of InEU and ODU)

Abstract

The main problem: In modern conditions, the development of the student entrepreneurial community, the formation of entrepreneurial skills, support and promotion of start-up projects and ideas increase the competitiveness of future graduates and give them the opportunity to realize their creative and entrepreneurial potential. According to the authors, the implementation of policies in the field of entrepreneurial education, the development of an entrepreneurial ecosystem and entrepreneurial thinking requires the exchange of experience and the study of new approaches and methods of working with students. Therefore, the article discusses the main areas of activity of the Innovative University of Eurasia and the Old Dominion University (USA) for the development of the entrepreneurial community.

Purpose: To consider the process of organizing training in the direction of "Entrepreneurship" and to present the opinions of the authors in this direction.

Methods: The work used theoretical, experimental, methodological, descriptive and analytical research methods.

Results and their significance: The authors conclude that the educational trajectory in the direction of "Entrepreneurship" contributes to the formation of graduates of a new formation, with an active life position, which affects the development of human potential. The role of universities in the development of the entrepreneurial community lies in the implementation of educational activities with an emphasis on developing students' entrepreneurial skills in the process of their education, in improving the quality of education, and developing new forms and methods. Participation in joint projects to build an entrepreneurial community expands the boundaries of internationalization of higher education. Therefore, in this article, the authors try to convey their approaches and methods of work on the formation of the student entrepreneurial community as an important component of the system of entrepreneurial education.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, youth, entrepreneurial community, entrepreneurial education, entrepreneurial thinking, business ideas, start-up projects.

Introduction

Currently, the world community has high hopes for universities, which are tasked with promoting economic growth and the formation of a knowledge society. Along with educational, research and innovation activities, universities are called upon to participate in the development of our state, to ensure the continuous growth of the country's intellectual and innovative potential. The basis for the formation of an entrepreneurial university model is the need to create entrepreneurial thinking, entrepreneurial activity and the entrepreneurial community in order to activate the innovative development of regions and the country in accordance with their strategic priorities. Entrepreneurship can become an important part of the university's activities, as it is aimed at strengthening the financial condition of the university, expanding the range of services provided to it and the formation of a corporate entrepreneurial culture. Universities around the world now recognize the importance of engaging with broader economic and cultural trends to promote growth within their local and regional economies and to provide opportunity for social mobility for their students. An increasingly important factor in both economic performance and social mobility is a university's focus on innovation and entrepreneurship as disciplines that can be taught and experienced. These are significant contributors to the institution's culture that can be mobilized to attract high-performing students, faculty, staff, and stakeholders. Innovation and entrepreneurship also encourage university faculty, administration and staff to consider how research (both individual and institutional), service centers, service interests, and community partnerships can be expanded and commercialized.

Materials and methods

The theoretical basis for writing this article is the work and scientific developments of domestic and foreign scientists on the problem under study, as well as materials from universities on the formation of an entrepreneurial community and the development of entrepreneurial thinking in the student environment. The methodological basis of the study was general scientific and special methodological techniques and methods,

namely: systematic approach, analysis and synthesis, generalization, induction method, graphic method, comparison method.

Results

The article reflects the results of the activities of two universities: the Innovative Eurasian University (Pavlodar) and Old Dominion University (USA). This study, based on a set of theoretical and methodological grounds, practical suggestions and recommendations, can be assessed as a completed study aimed at solving such an important problem as the growth of entrepreneurial and innovative activity of the younger generation.

Discussion

In order to understand the approaches and methods of forming a student entrepreneurial community, as well as to consider the possibilities for adapting this experience, we will consider the activities of universities in this area.

At the Innovative University of Eurasia (InEU), the first attempts to form entrepreneurial thinking were carried out in 2011, when the university introduced the discipline "Doing Business" into the educational process for all third-year undergraduate specialties. The goal was to form students' understanding of entrepreneurship, acquire skills in developing a business plan and presentation techniques, generate a business idea, feasibility study of a project, knowledge of the legal foundations of entrepreneurship, analysis of financial flows, accounting and financial reporting. These aspects are discussed in strategy for the development of entrepreneurial education and the entrepreneurial university for 2017-2021, Innovative University of Eurasia, 2017.

In 2017, at the initiative of Eurasian Group LLP (ERG), the Innovative University of Eurasia entered the Republican project "Ecosystem of Student Entrepreneurship". The goal of the project is the development and implementation of entrepreneurial potential in the student and teaching environment, the formation of an entrepreneurial culture and entrepreneurial activity in the university.

The university determined the trajectory of training in the direction of "Entrepreneurship", introduced such disciplines as "Generation of business ideas and obtaining a patent", "Self-management and presentation technique", "Business canvas and lean manufacturing", "Doing business", "Economics and entrepreneurship in the industry". During this period, more than 3,000 students received entrepreneurial skills, more than 15 teachers were involved in training. As part of the project, the university annually hosts such competitions as the university competition for start-up projects "InSpaceInEU" and hackathons. This allows the best teams to participate in regional and national events.

One of the key centers for entrepreneurship development in InEU is the Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation Development; the Center includes a coworking space and a business incubator, which is open to all students, teachers, employees, alumni and community members to support entrepreneurship and new start-up projects. Also, the employees of the center conduct scientific research in the direction of development of youth entrepreneurship, organize an online mentoring program "Mentor Hour", hackathons at the request of companies on specific problematic issues, as noted in the concept of business incubator development of the Innovative Eurasian University, 2020. The university's website has a center page that reflects news in the field of entrepreneurial education, current programs, student reviews and the InSpaceInEU online store with student projects [1].

As part of the formation of the student entrepreneurial community, training was organized in the direction of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurs of the region are involved in the educational process, the qualifications of business trainers and teachers of the university are upgraded, and mentoring assistance is provided in the preparation of business models. Upon successful development of the educational trajectory in the direction of "Entrepreneurship", graduate students receive a certificate of professional development.

Today, it is important to support students' projects through the university's business incubator in order to support and find opportunities for the implementation of start-up projects.

In general, the model for the formation of an entrepreneurial community at the university can be represented the choice of an entrepreneurial educational trajectory by first-year students, training in entrepreneurial disciplines for four years, providing an opportunity to participate in competitions for start-up projects. Then mentoring support, assistance in finding investors, providing sites for working with start-up projects, comprehensive support for business initiatives, and the acquisition of entrepreneurial competencies by university graduates.

Every year, work in this area is improved thanks to feedback, these are reviews, survey results, the number of students, the number of successful business projects and victories in competitions. Feedback is becoming a tool for improving entrepreneurial education and supporting the initiatives of the student entrepreneurial community at InEU. Old Dominion University (ODU) has become a university that has turned innovation and entrepreneurship into a major institutional initiative, with a focus on developing innovative student entrepreneurship programs and operating new and renewed organizations that expand the university's reach in research, business, investment and workforce. ... and the political activities of the surrounding community like never before. Thus, entrepreneurship and the leading role of the university are seen as driving forces of economic development, innovation, jobs and enterprise creation. As a result, ties with the community have expanded significantly, leading to new academic, economic and research opportunities for students, faculty, staff and alumni.

Old Dominion University (ODU) is a public research university in Norfolk, Virginia, USA. ODU is one of the largest universities in Virginia, with an enrollment of over 24,000 students in seven colleges.

ODU is placed in a region that is not currently identified as one of American's major "hot beds" for startup company establishment and growth. That said, the region is rapidly expanding its capabilities to support startups by recognizing the need to focus on a few specific industries and technologies.

In 2014, ODU specifically identified innovation and entrepreneurship as one of the "pillars" of its 5-year Strategic Plan, calling for establishment of new degree programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels and new programs to support both internal and external entrepreneurs seeking to start and grow new innovation-based ventures.

Innovation and entrepreneurship is embedded in programs and colleges throughout Old Dominion University and students are able, and encouraged, to take advantage of a wide range of activities irrespective of their college and degree program. Further, ODU faculty, staff and alumni, along with members of the local community, are able to engage with both on-campus and off-campus programs to explore collaborations with local businesses and to pursue the establishment of their own innovation-based enterprises.

One of the key focal points for entrepreneurship at ODU is the Strome Entrepreneurial Center (SEC), a key on-campus resource and collaborator open to all students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members to support entrepreneurship and innovation [2]. The SEC was originally founded through a gift from an ODU alum and entrepreneur who wanted to give back to the university. The SEC has a highly visible physical presence on campus that is used for events, training, and networking, but also includes opportunities for general education about entrepreneurship as a career path, and available staff to provide individual advising and mentoring for students and others wanting to start a venture, or who already have a business.

An important feature of the Strome Entrepreneurial Center is its independence from any of the university's colleges, making it a truly university-wide resource. Since innovation and entrepreneurship are inherently multi-disciplinary and collaborative activities, a conscious decision was made when SEC was established in 2014 to locate it at the highest organizational level of the university [2]. This allowed for a partnership with academic affairs, office of research, and other ODU divisions to avoid the perception that innovation and entrepreneurship is somehow a uniquely business or technology-related endeavor. One of the primary informal successes of the SEC is the on-going participation of students and faculty from engineering, science, education, business, arts and letters, health science, etc. as well as centers and staff in the office of research.

An important and related initiative is the Entsminger Entrepreneurship Fellows program, begun in 2014 based on a gift from an entrepreneurially minded ODU alum. Since 2014, the Entsminger Fellows program has annually funded six faculty members, one from each university college, to attend a well-known entrepreneurship training program to help them better understand the basic principles of entrepreneurship and lead to more robust teaching of those principles in their course offerings. In addition, the now nearly 40 Entsminger Fellows have spread out across campus working to inject a more entrepreneurial mind-set into the culture of the university. The E-Fellows have subsequently created their own Institute to teach innovation and entrepreneurship to faculty and staff inside ODU, but also collegiate and K-12 faculty in the community, known as "PACE" – Program Acceleration for Collegiate Entrepreneurship. PACE was successfully initiated in 2019, suspended in 2020 due to COVID-19, and planned for Spring, 2021.

One example of the value of informal electronic collaboration is the course on international entrepreneurship, co-created by an ODU professor and faculty from the Innovative Eurasian University (InEU). This collaboration arose because e-collaboration enabled other disaggregated parts of the university to interact with others to get involved in a grant-funded collaboration between ODU and InEU. Additional joint projects are also planned between ODU and InEU, including student-to-student interaction with mentoring, and e-collaboration is the main communication tool within ODU to identify and encourage participation from the entire university.

One of the most interesting and innovative student entrepreneurship initiatives came about in 2015 when the university established a physical on-campus retail store specifically to allow ODU students and recent alumni entrepreneurs sell their consumer products to the community at large. The store is called THE Monarch Way and, like any retail establishment, maintains regular hours to allow for walk-in shoppers and thus has to manage inventory, staffing, financial performance, pricing, and the like [3]. THE Monarch Way features products from approved ODU students, faculty, staff, and recent alumni entrepreneurs, including artwork, candles, children's books, clothing, cupcakes, duffle bags, fidget spinners, fire starter kits, greeting cards, gourmet foods, hats, jewelry, nutrition drinks, purses, and more. The store is operated and staffed by students drawn from both the entrepreneurs themselves, along with students interested in learning how to run a profitable retail establishment. Prospective entrepreneurs are typically required to have a business plan vetted through the Strome Entrepreneurial Center and will generally commit to work a regular schedule of hours in the store [3]. In addition, faculty, staff, and alumni can place products for sale in the store, but subject to a commission agreement with ODU's chapter of the international ENACTUS program whereby ENACTUS members cover the work obligation and receive a percentage of sales for the Enactus team social projects.

In 2018, the SEC was combined with another university-based enterprise to create the Institute for Innovation & Entrepreneurship (IIE). IIE was established to be a "one-stop shop" for those on the campus and in

the community seeking assistance and partnerships for entrepreneurship, innovation and economic development. IIE opened an office in downtown Norfolk, not far from the ODU main campus, in partnership with the City of Norfolk, to demonstrate the bridge of interests.

The IIE staff routinely works with student and faculty seeking to commercialize their inventions and intellectual property, and offers Lean Startup-based mentoring to local, regional, and statewide companies and economic development professionals to help grow the Commonwealth's entrepreneurial community. IIE has active engagements with a wide range of incubators and accelerators, angel investment groups, and startup training programs, and helps with the ongoing operation of several startup networking events, pitch competitions, and both formal and informal mentoring programs.

Students have a choice of entrepreneurship coursework at ODU, no matter their primary discipline. The Entrepreneurship Certificate is open to all students, and a new Minor in Entrepreneurship is now offered. Graduate Certificates in Entrepreneurship for Engineering, for the Arts, and for Social Justice are available, as well as "embedded" entrepreneurship modules in traditional courses such as biology, criminal justice, design, education, and others. The Strome College of Business also offers an array of individual courses related to entrepreneurship.

A unique way that ODU supports entrepreneurs is through its administrative services support. For example, ODU's Strategic Marketing and Communications staff routinely highlights student, faculty, and alumni entrepreneurs in its marketing, social media, and PR coverage – which the entrepreneurs can re-post and use to support their marketing plans. The SEC, development office, and alumni affairs partner each year for the "ODU Entrepreneurial Hall of Fame" to honor alumni and community entrepreneurs. The Auxiliary Services staff, which among other responsibilities oversees the food service, bookstore, and graduate regalia contracts, has opened opportunities for pilots with student entrepreneurs having related food, fashion, and service companies.

Faculty and staff to help university centers also routinely contact the IIE staff and programs become revenue centers for the university; there are several examples of partnership between IIE and the College of Health Sciences and others that are currently in process. IIE staff also support commercialization of university-owned intellectual property (IP), and have been collaborating with several university applied research centers and faculty members in this regard. One example is a novel blockchain product for application in the health care industry through a partnership with a regional integrated care delivery system and ODU research faculty.

In the US, universities like ODU are increasingly answering such questions with a commitment to helping grow the local economy by:

1. Improving the local innovation ecosystem in ways that allow students, faculty, and staff expanded opportunities for jobs, consulting projects, academic research, and new venture formation;
2. Forming broader national and international partnerships related to the areas of technical excellence and industry knowledge inherent in the local economy;
3. Further developing and expanding programs that help entrepreneurs form and grow innovative new ventures that can, over time, become significant contributors to the university through sponsored research funding, job creation, and community development.

In particular, ODU is focusing on five areas that are at the heart of the innovation and entrepreneurship: engagement in regional economic development, Industry collaboration, Student entrepreneurship, Faculty entrepreneurship, expanded commercialization of university-developed Intellectual Property.

More to the point, the institution is increasingly focusing our academics, innovation and research, and entrepreneurial support efforts on industries and technologies core to our region's economy, i.e., Maritime and shipbuilding technologies, commercial and military ship operations, global supply chains, logistics and distribution, aerospace and defense technology, and sea-level rise mitigation, and travel and tourism. This includes continuing to engage established companies that have traditionally been our research partners, placing greater emphasis on supporting startup companies within these target industries, sharing facilities with startups, offering targeted support to local non-university entrepreneurship support programs (ESPs), and working more directly with local financing sources to create venture funds and incentive programs to help fund startups.

ODU has committed to further expanding its activities in international entrepreneurship to help our American students develop a more international perspective on innovation and entrepreneurship, to attract international students interested in experiencing the American approach to innovation and entrepreneurship, and to develop a wider range of teaching and research collaboration with faculty from international universities. As noted earlier, innovation and entrepreneurship is an inherently collaborative and multi-disciplinary activity; it is also an increasingly international activity and ODU expects to grow its capacity accordingly to offer a more global experience to its students.

Old Dominion University has made innovation and entrepreneurship a major institutional initiative in recent years, with special focus on developing innovative student entrepreneurship programs and operating new and re-energized organizations that extend the university's reach into the research, business, investment, workforce, and policy-making activities of the surrounding community as never before. Entrepreneurship and the leadership role of a university viewed as drivers of economic development, creating innovation, jobs, and enterprises. The result has been a greatly expanded connection to the community leading to new academic, economic, and research opportunities for students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

Finally, due to the critical role of the university in the region, its entrepreneurship initiatives receive the support of the community, local influencers from the entertainment and sports industries, mainstream businesses, government, and political leaders. Community leaders view entrepreneurship as critical to reducing the region's dependence on defense spending and creating opportunities for economic mobility to residents. As a result, of these initiatives, the Hampton Roads region is experiencing a surge in entrepreneurial activity through collaborative initiatives between the university and local businesses and government agencies.

With some successes, some failures, and an occasional pivot, the innovation and entrepreneurship community at ODU – students, faculty, staff, and stakeholders – plans to continue to evolve and grow because that's what innovators and entrepreneurs do.

Conclusion

In this article, the authors shared their experience and the results of their activities in the formation and development of the entrepreneurial community in universities. The need to develop new approaches and methods of work in the direction of "Entrepreneurship" stems from the immediate needs of educational institutions, scientific research in the field of entrepreneurship, including youth entrepreneurship, as well as the training of specialists with vital skills, ready to adapt to the changing market environment. Thanks to this, the partner universities form a consistency and integrity of the training process, education becomes flexible, mobile, competitive, adapted to external changes. Particularly valuable in the framework of cooperation between universities is the possibility of introducing modern technologies for entrepreneurial education based on information and communication interaction. This allows expanding the boundaries of the development of the entrepreneurial community in order to popularize entrepreneurship, develop intellectual and creative capabilities and form an active citizenship of young people.

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Университеттерде студенттік кәсіпкерлік қоғамдастықты дамыту (ИнЕУ мен ОДУ тәжірибесі)

Басты мәселе: Қазіргі жағдайда студенттік кәсіпкерлік қоғамдастықты дамыту, кәсіпкерлік дағдыларды қалыптастыру, стартап-жобалар мен идеяларды қолдау және алға жылжыту болашақ түлектердің бәсекеге қабілеттілігін арттырады және олардың шығармашылық және кәсіпкерлік әлеуетін іске асыруға мүмкіндік береді. Авторлардың пікірі бойынша кәсіпкерлік білім беру саласындағы саясатты жүзеге асыру, кәсіпкерлік экожүйені және кәсіпкерлік ойлауды дамыту тәжірибе алмасуды және студенттермен жұмыс жасаудың жаңа тәсілдері мен әдістерін зерттеуді қажет етеді. Сондықтан мақалада Инновациялық Еуразия университеті мен Олд Доминион университетінің (АҚШ) кәсіпкерлік қоғамдастықты дамытудың негізгі бағыттары талқыланады.

Мақсаты: «Кәсіпкерлік» бағыты бойынша оқытуды ұйымдастыру процесін қарастыру және осы бағытта авторлардың пікірлерімен таныстыру.

Әдістері: жұмыста теориялық, эксперименттік, әдістемелік, сипаттамалық және аналитикалық зерттеу әдістері қолданылды.

Нәтижелер және олардың маңызы: Авторлар «Кәсіпкерлік» бағыты бойынша білім беру траекториясы жаңа формацияны бітірушілердің белсенді өмірлік ұстанымы мен қалыптасуына ықпал етеді, бұл адам әлеуетінің дамуына әсер етеді деген тұжырымға келеді. Университеттердің кәсіпкерлік қоғамдастықты дамытудағы рөлі – студенттердің оқу процесінде, білім сапасын арттыруда және жаңа формалар мен әдістерді дамытуда кәсіптік дағдыларды дамытуға бағытталған білім беру қызметін жүзеге

асыру. Кәсіпкерлік қоғамдастықты құру жөніндегі бірлескен жобаларға қатысу жоғары білімнің интернационалдандыру шекараларын кеңейтеді. Сондықтан, осы мақалада авторлар студенттерге кәсіпкерлік білім беру жүйесінің маңызды компоненті ретінде студенттердің кәсіпкерлік қоғамдастығын қалыптастыру бойынша жұмыс тәсілдері мен әдістерін жеткізуге тырысады.

Түйін сөздер: кәсіпкерлік, жастар, кәсіпкерлік қоғамдастық, кәсіпкерлік білім, кәсіпкерлік ойлау, бизнес идеялар, стартап-жобалар.

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Развитие студенческого бизнес-сообщества в вузах (опыт ИнЕУ и ODU)

В сложившейся ситуации развитие студенческого бизнес-сообщества, формирование предпринимательских навыков, поддержка и продвижение стартап-проектов и идей повысят конкурентоспособность будущих выпускников и позволят им реализовать свой творческий и предпринимательский потенциал. По мнению авторов, реализация политики в области обучения предпринимательству, развития предпринимательской экосистемы и предпринимательского мышления требуют обмена опытом и изучения новых способов и средств работы со студентами. Поэтому в статье рассматриваются основные направления развития бизнес-сообщества Инновационного Евразийского университета и Университета Олд Доминион (США).

Цель статьи - рассмотреть процесс организации обучения по направлению «Предпринимательство» и представить взгляды авторов в этой области. В работе использованы теоретические, экспериментальные, методологические, описательные и аналитические методы исследования. Авторы делают вывод о том, что образовательная траектория по направлению «Предпринимательство» способствует формированию новой формации выпускников с активной жизненной позицией. Это влияет на развитие человеческого потенциала. Роль вузов в развитии бизнес-сообщества заключается в осуществлении образовательной деятельности, направленной на развитие профессиональных навыков студентов в процессе обучения, повышение качества обучения и развитие новых форм и методов. Участие в совместных проектах по построению бизнес-сообщества расширяет границы интернационализации высшего образования. Поэтому в данной статье авторы определяют способы и средства работы по формированию студенческого бизнес-сообщества как важной составляющей системы бизнес-образования.

Ключевые слова: предпринимательство, молодежь, бизнес-сообщество, бизнес-образование, предпринимательское мышление, бизнес-идеи, стартап-проекты.

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